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Sustainable development: report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 54 (see A/62/419, para. 2). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 21st and 30th meetings, on 5 and 30 November 2007. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/62/SR.21 and 30).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/62/L.14 and A/C.2/62/L.39

2. At the 21st meeting, on 5 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session" (A/C.2/62/L.14), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005 and 61/205 of 20 December 2006,

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 10 parts, under the symbol A/62/419 and Add.1-9.

"*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Recognizing* the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need,

"*Taking into account* Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),

"*Reaffirming* the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition,

"*Emphasizing* that capacity-building and technology support for developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"*Recognizing* the need for the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building of the United Nations Environment Programme by providing the requisite financial, technical and other resources,

"*Welcoming* the proposal made by the Government of Egypt to establish an international centre for judicial capacity-building in environmental law in Cairo,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session and the decisions contained therein;

"2. *Declares* the decade 2010-2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification, based on the recommendation of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme during its twenty-fourth session;

"3. *Expresses concern* over the lack of progress in the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building of the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in this regard, calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance and also calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme to continue its efforts to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan through strengthened cooperation with other stakeholders, based on their comparative advantages;

"4. *Recognizes* the progress made so far on the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, particularly through its Quick Start Programme, and welcomes in this regard the decision taken by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group of Governments, regional economic integration organizations and stakeholder representatives to review options for enhanced voluntary measures;

"5. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and welcomes the continued active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group;

"6. *Also emphasizes* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at all levels and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission;

"7. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in shifting emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work and also welcomes in this regard decision 24/9 of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on the budget and programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme for the biennium 2008-2009;

"8. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of the Programme, including through the provision of adequate financial resources;

"9. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

"10. *Invites* Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

"11. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

"12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session, under the item entitled 'Sustainable development', a sub-item entitled 'Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session'."

3. At its 30th meeting, on 30 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session" (A/C.2/62/L.39), submitted by the Vice-Chairperson, Melanie Santizo-Sandoval (Guatemala), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.14.

4. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.39 (see A/C.2/62/SR.30).

5. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the Vice-Chairperson, Melanie Santizo-Sandoval (Guatemala), and the facilitator, Javad Amin-Mansour (Egypt) (see A/C.2/62/SR.30).

6. The Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.39 (see para. 8).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.39, draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.14 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005 and 61/205 of 20 December 2006,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[1]

Recognizing the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need, including through the ongoing informal consultative process on the institutional framework for United Nations environmental activities,

Taking into account Agenda 21[2] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[3]

Reaffirming the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition,

Emphasizing that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recognizing the need to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,[4] including through the provision of additional financial resources for that purpose,

Noting the proposal made by Egypt to establish an international centre for judicial capacity-building in environmental law in Cairo,[5]

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[1] See resolution 60/1.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

[5] See UNEP/GC/24/12, annex V.

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session[6] and the decisions contained therein;[7]

2. *Notes* the publication of the fourth *Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development* by the United Nations Environment Programme;[8]

3. *Decides* to declare the decade 2010-2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification, based on the recommendation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session;[9]

4. *Notes* that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session discussed all components of the recommendations on international environmental governance as contained in its decision SS.VII/1, and also notes the continued discussions scheduled for the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council;[10]

5. *Stresses* the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,[4] in this regard calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance, and also calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme to continue its efforts to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan through strengthened cooperation with other stakeholders, based on their comparative advantages;

6. *Recognizes* the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,[11] particularly through its Quick Start Programme,[12] and invites Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to engage actively and cooperate closely to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, including the Quick Start Programme, including through providing adequate resources;

7. *Also recognizes* the global challenges posed by mercury and, in this regard, notes the decision by the Governing Council to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group of Governments, regional economic integration organizations and stakeholder representatives to review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments,[13] taking into account the terms of reference and the priorities set out in that decision, and urges

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[6] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25).

[7] Ibid., annex I.

[8] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.III.D.19.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25), annex I, decision 24/14; see also General Assembly resolution 61/185 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67.

[10] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25).

[11] Report of the International Conference on Chemicals Management on the work of its first session (SAICM/ICCM.1/7), annexes I, II and III.

[12] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25), annex I, decision 24/3.

[13] Ibid., decision 24/3, para. 28.

Governments and other stakeholders to continue and enhance their support of the United Nations Environment Programme mercury programme partnerships through the provision of technical and financial resources;

8. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and welcomes the continued active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group;

9. *Also emphasizes* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21[2] and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[3] at all levels, and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission;

10. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in shifting emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work, and also welcomes, in this regard, decision 24/9 of the Governing Council on the budget and programme of work of the United Nations Environment Programme;[14]

11. *Notes* the request by the Governing Council to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013;[15]

12. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources;

13. *Notes* the ongoing consultations with a view to improving further the proposed Environment Watch strategy as an integral part of the wider strategic vision of the United Nations Environment Programme;[16]

14. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

15. *Invites* Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

16. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi

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[14] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25), annex I.

[15] Ibid., decision 24/9, para. 13.

[16] Ibid., decision 24/1, sect. III.

under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session".